

# Caltrans Steps-Up Efforts “Toward ZERO Deaths”

Caltrans workers are not the only people who die in work zone collisions. Safety for all—workers and users—is Caltrans’ top priority. Overall, fatalities on the state highway system have dropped during the last decade, and the department’s new [Strategic Management Plan](#) sets new goals to move “toward zero deaths” for Caltrans workers, contractors, motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

## Strategic Management and Highway Safety Plans

The recently released [Caltrans 2015–2020 Strategic Management Plan](#) provides clear direction on how the department will achieve its mission and vision and establishes benchmarks to monitor its progress. The 2015–20 plan sets new safety goals and adds a performance measure to address bicycle, pedestrian, and transit safety.

Caltrans also participates in the [Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#), a statewide data-driven traffic safety plan to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. In coordination with federal, state, local, and private sector safety stakeholders, the Strategic Highway Safety Plan establishes goals, objectives, and challenge areas.

## Work-Zone Worker Fatalities

Since 1921, Caltrans has lost 183 of its workers to fatal accidents. Caltrans’ goal is to have zero work zone-related worker fatalities. The most recent losses were in 2013 when Joseph “Robert” Jones and Shawn Baker died during a rock-scaling accident. In the January 2014 issue of the *Mile Marker*, Caltrans reported 180 worker deaths in work zones. Since then, historic records and family reports have identified three additional work zone-related employee deaths: James Daniel Archer (1921), William Krasevac (1933), and Lawrence Peters (1967).



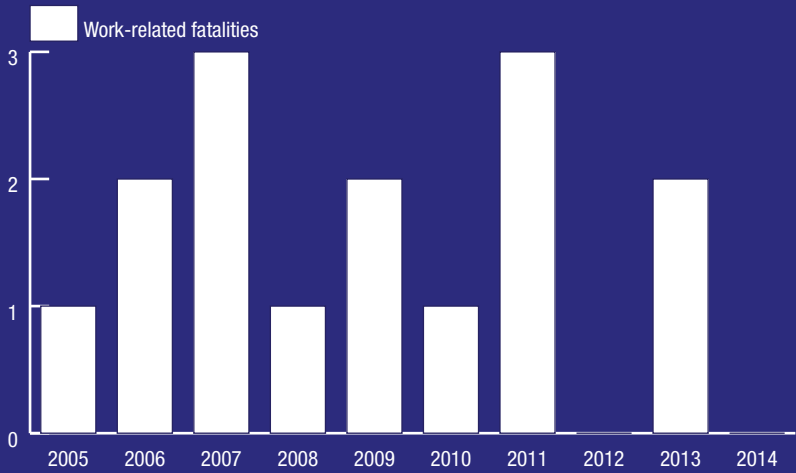
Most work-zone fatalities are caused by rear-end collisions.

Following the success of California’s “Slow for the Cone Zone” public awareness campaign, Caltrans launched the “Be Work Zone Alert” campaign in 2014. The campaign features the children of actual Caltrans workers as spokespeople, underscoring the real human tragedy that happens when a highway worker is injured or killed. In addition to billboards statewide, the campaign features television ads to educate motorists and encourage them to Slow for the Cone Zone and move over for emergency vehicles.

Caltrans and its contractors are not the only people at risk in highway work zones. An estimated 85 to 90 percent of work-zone fatalities are drivers and passengers. Most are caused by rear-end collisions involving speeding, driver distraction, and aggressive driving. In 2012, there were 4,940 collisions in highway work zones. Of those, 44 collisions were fatal, killing 47 people, none of whom were Caltrans workers. This is why Caltrans and its partners urge drivers to be especially alert near work zones.

## Caltrans Highway Worker Fatalities

(2005–14)



Data Source: Division of Public Affairs  
Note: Data is by calendar year

*Fifteen Caltrans workers have been killed in highway work zones during the 10-year period from 2005 to 2014. During that time, 2012 and 2014 were the only years when the department did not lose any employees in work zone incidents.*

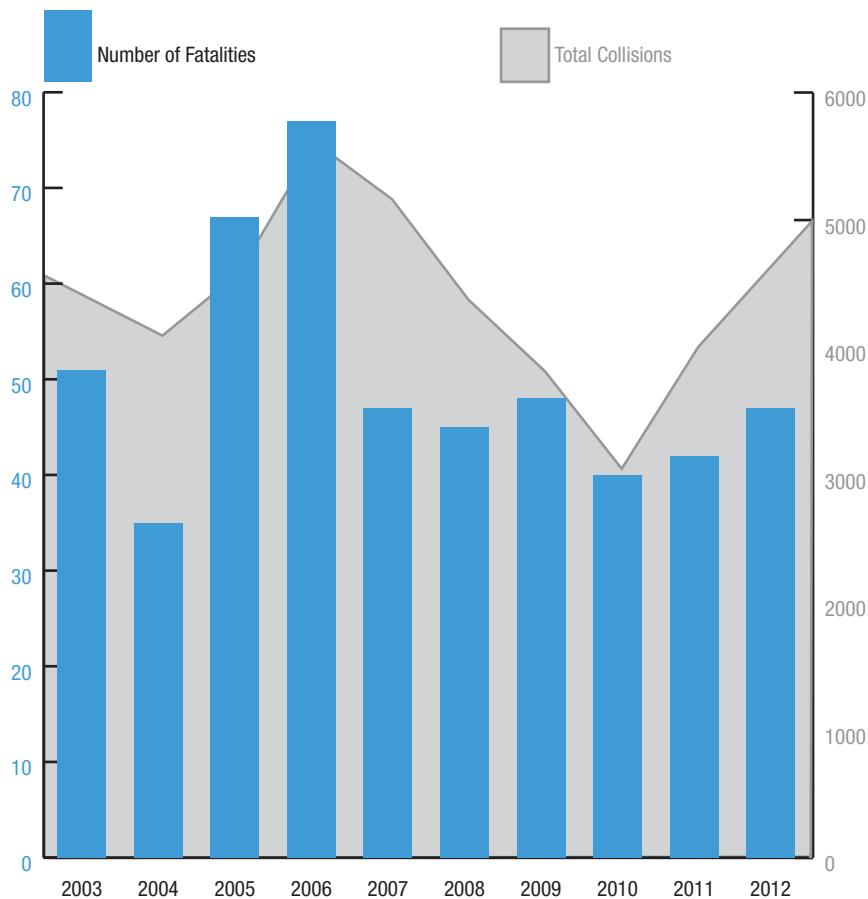




## Fatalities on the State Highway System

In 2012, vehicles in California traveled 175 billion miles on the state highway system and were involved in 138,657 collisions, 1,049 of which were fatal and claimed 1,174 lives. Highway fatalities are measured using a federal standard for every 100 million vehicle miles traveled. In the previous Caltrans strategic management plan, the department's goal was less than 1.0 fatalities for every 100 million vehicle miles traveled on the state highway system. Caltrans' new strategic plan calls for the department to maintain 0.5 or less fatalities for every 100 million vehicle miles traveled on the state highway system.

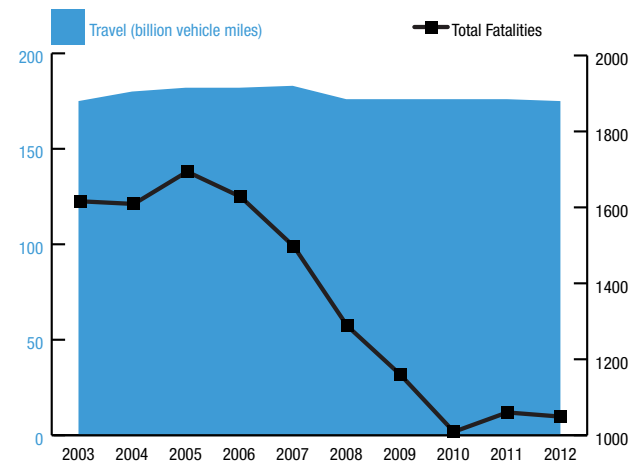
## Fatalities in Work Zones versus Collisions



This graph shows the number of highway work zone collisions for the 10-year period from 2003 to 2012 and the number of deaths from those collisions.

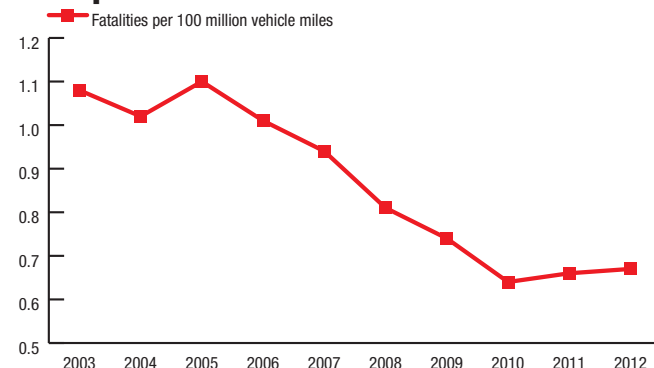
Source: Division of Research, Innovation and System Innovation

## Total Vehicle Miles Traveled versus Fatalities



Sources: Division of Research, Innovation & System Information; Division of Traffic Operations

## Fatalities per 100 Million Vehicles Miles



Source: Division of Research, Innovation and System Innovation





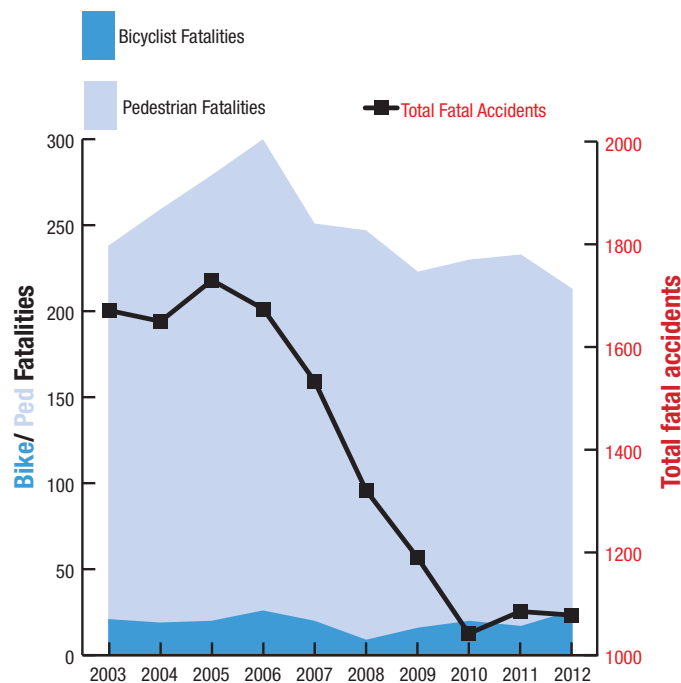
In the 2015 first quarter *Mile Marker*, Caltrans reported that the 100 million mile fatality rate was 0.61 in 2012. That number was based on preliminary data. The final report, published in the spring, showed the actual rate was 0.67, a slight increase from the 0.66 reported for 2011.

## Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Fatalities

The 2010–12 California Household Travel Survey shows that more than twice as many people are choosing to walk, bike, or use public transportation to get to their destinations than in the 2000 survey. Much of that walking, cycling, and riding transit occurs on the state highway system, which is more than freeways and interstates. In some areas, the state highway is the main street running through town.

While motorist fatalities on the state highway system have dropped significantly during the last ten years, the same cannot be said for bicyclist and pedestrian. Caltrans has set a goal of reducing by 10 percent each year the number of fatalities for car, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travelers on the state highway system.

## Bike and Ped Fatalities Compared to Total Fatal Accidents



This graph shows the total fatal collisions on the state highway system and how many of those involved bicycles and pedestrians for the 10-year period from 2003 to 2012.

Sources: Division of Research, Innovation & System Information; Division of Traffic Operations